

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-27 are pending. Claim 24 has been objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all limitations of independent Claim 22. However, the Office Action objects to the drawings for failing to show a cross section of an "inner surface" in Figures 1 and 2 and a motor recited in Claim 20. The Office Action also rejects Claims 1-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Moreover, the Office Action rejects Claims 1, 2, 11, 12, 22, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 5085670 to Owaki et al. The Office Action also rejects Claims 4, 5, 6, 10, 14, 15, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owaki. Claims 3 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owaki in view of European Patent Publication No. 1211214 to Floyd et al. In addition, Claims 16-19 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,326,113 to Montalvo, III. The Office Action also rejects Claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,161,791 to Gentry, Jr. Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owaki in view of Gentry and further in view of Fejer, Science and Technology. Finally, Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owaki in view of Fejer.

As will be explained in further detail below, independent Claims 1, 11, and 22 have been amended to further clarify and distinguish the cited references. Claim 28 has been added. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

As indicated above, replacement drawings have been submitted to overcome the objection to the drawings. Claim 20 has been canceled to overcome the Examiner's objection, and Claim 21 has been amended to recite proper dependency. Furthermore, independent Claims 1, 11, and 22 have been amended to recite that a hardness of the chuck-engaging layer is less than a hardness of the core member in order to overcome the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. In addition, Claim 18 has been amended for clarification. Therefore, Applicant submits that the objections to the drawings and the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, are overcome.

The Examiner rejects independent Claims 1, 11, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Owaki. Owaki discloses a sealing sleeve for adjusting the diameter of a payoff reel. In particular, Owaki discloses a sealing sleeve that may be fitted to a drum of a payoff reel to adjust the diameter of the payoff reel. The sealing sleeve includes a rubber sleeve surrounded by multiple arc-shaped pieces of steel. The sealing sleeve is inserted over the drum, and the diameter of the sealing sleeve may be adjusted by expanding the drum to avoid slipping between the drum and the coil of a double width steel strip.

Because the drum of Owaki may be expanded to engage the sealing sleeve and adjust the diameter of the sealing sleeve to engage the coil of steel, the Official Action alleges that the drum operates as a “chuck,” while the rubber sleeve functions as a “chuck-engaging layer,” and the arc-shaped pieces of steel corresponds to a “core member.” Independent Claims 1 and 11 have been amended to recite that a web material is capable of being wound on or unwound off of the outer surface of the core member, while independent Claim 22 recites the step of rotating the chuck about a longitudinal axis extending through the core member such that a web material is wound about the outer surface of the core member. Thus, the core member is capable of accommodating web materials for winding or unwinding the web material onto or off of the outer surface of the core member.

In contrast, Owaki discloses a plurality of interconnected steel pieces (3) that overlie the rubber sleeve (2) to form the sealing sleeve (1), as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. The sealing sleeve (1) is positioned on a drum (21) that may then engage a coil of steel (22). As such, the drum and sealing sleeve cooperate to effectively function as a “chuck” to engage the coil of steel such that steel may be paid off of the coil (see FIG. 8 of Owaki). In this regard, the sealing sleeve is an extension of the drum that functions as a chuck to engage the coil of steel. Conversely, the core member of the claimed invention is capable of receiving a web material thereon for winding or unwinding of web material. In other words, the alleged “core member” of Owaki is the sealing sleeve, but the sealing sleeve is incapable of winding or unwinding web materials on or off of the outer surface of the sealing sleeve.

Furthermore, independent Claims 1 and 22 recite that the chuck-engaging layer is affixed to an inner surface of the core member, while independent Claim 11 has been amended to recite

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that the chuck-engaging layer is secured to an inner surface of the core member. Thus, the chuck-engaging layer is carried by the core member. This is unlike Owaki where the rubber sleeve is positioned on an inner surface of the drum rather than the coil of steel. As explained above, the sealing sleeve does not directly receive the coil of steel for winding or unwinding. Thus, the rubber sleeve of Owaki is not secured to an inner surface of the coil of steel, which is unlike the chuck-engaging layer of the claimed invention that is directly affixed or otherwise secured to the inner surface of the core member.

Therefore, Applicants submit that the rejection of independent Claims 1, 11, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is overcome. Since the dependent claims include each of the recitations of a respective independent claim, the rejections of the dependent claims are also overcome for at least the same reasons as described above in conjunction with the independent claims.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks presented above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the present claims of the present application are in condition for immediate allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



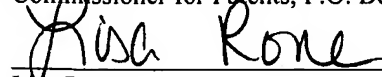
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Appendix – Replacement Drawings

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Amendments to the Drawings:

Figures 1 and 2 have been amended to illustrate hatching for the inner surface.
Therefore, the objection of the drawings is overcome. The attached Appendix includes replacement drawing sheets.